Pollution in Ganga and Yamuna

1881. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware the major rivers like Ganga and Yamuna have been so much polluted that even fish do not survive in them;

(b) whether the scheme of cleaning the major rivers has been given up; and

(c) if not, what measures are being taken to see that untreated factories and domestic waste is not discharged in the rivers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Dissolved oxygen levels in a river are important in assessing the river water quality and the survival of fish in it. The Ganga Action Plan Phase-I started in 1985 is nearing completion. The water quality of the Ganga has shown an improvement in terms of the dissolved oxygen level owing to the implementation of this plan. The summer average values for dissolved oxygen levels are more than the required standard of 5 mg. per litre at the monitoring stations along the stretch of the Ganga. The Yamuna Action Plan, a component of Ganga Action Plan Phase-II is also under implementation in 20 towns of UP and Haryana besides Delhi. This plan will be completed in 14 towns of U.P. and Haryana and in Delhi by 1999-2000. The quality of water in the river Yamuna will improve considerably when the works under the Yamuna Action Plan are completed and a minimum flow of fresh water is allowed in the river to dilute the effect of the discharge of treated sewage into it. No instances of fish dying in the water of the Ganga and the Yamuna have been reported after the above river action plans commenced.

(b) No, Sir. A National River Conservation Plan which includes the Ganga Action Plan Phase-ll is udner implementation to improve the water quality in 22 major rivers in 14 states covering pollution abatement works in 141 towns.

(c) Under the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I, out of 35 sewage treatment plants sanctioned, 29 plants with a capacity to treat 728 million litres per day of sewage have been completed. The remaining six sewage treatment plants with a treatment capacity of 145 million litres per day are in advanced stages of completion. In addition, sewage treatment plants are being constructed under the National River Conservation Plan to intercept and treat about 3675 million litres of municipal sewage per day. The Central Pollution Control Board issued directions in August 1997 under Section 18(l)(b) of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 to all the State Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees to take action against the defaulting industries. As a result, the number of the defaulting industries has gone down from 847 to 521. Legal action has been initiated by the respective State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution Control Committees against the defaulting units. The Central Pollution Control Board has also issued directions to the State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution Control Committees to ensure proper operation and maintenance of sewage treatment plants constructed under the National River Action Plan of the Government.

Sludge blanket plant for Ganga Action Plan

1882. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state: .

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report "Foul flows the Ganga", appearing in Outlook magazine dated 28th December, 1998;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;